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BOOK REVIEWS

Our Schools, Their Administration and Supervision. By W. E. CHANCELLOR. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1904. Pp. xiii+434. \$1.50.

Teachers' colleges and departments of education are rapidly developing at university centers. Within these departments the chair of school administration is only beginning to be recognized. I know of only three universities with such positions. This field is therefore undeveloped. Mr. William E. Chancellor, superintendent of schools at Bloomfield, N. J., attempts to take advantage of the opportunity offered by this situation.

In this work the author considers a wide range of topics, from the general school system to the board of education, the superintendent, the principal, the class teacher, and even the janitor. Scarcely a detail in the usual work of school administration and supervision has escaped the author's attention. In this respect, then, this book will appeal strongly to those who have had little, if any, experience in supervision, and to those who have given the subject no special study. The almost innumerable concrete illustrations concerning the organization of the board; the relation of the superintendent to teachers, board, and community; the supervisory duties of superintendent, principal, and supervisor; etc., etc., will be highly prized by a certain class of men. Every reader will have occasion to put a "N. B." in the margin from time to time, especially in the chapters on "The New Education" and "The Educational Policy of the Community." These set forth the social aspects of the school and deserve more emphasis.

On the other hand, it must be said that, in spite of the wide range of topics treated, the logical method of discussion, the many valuable suggestions, and the readability of the book, no close criticism can stamp this work with approval. There is probably too much written in this new field of education and too little that is well written. Some of the most characteristic deficiencies in this work must be pointed out.

The greatest weakness is in the method of treatment. This is strikingly unscientific. A true study of present educational problems calls for facts. Mere personal opinion must be ruled out. On p. 180, to show a financial reason for appointing a principal over a school, the author uses "Two Supposed Cases": (1) a school without a principal; (2) a school with a principal. He concludes that from a financial point of view a principal should be employed. The absurdity of such a basis for argument would be evident to any high-school debater. Further, unscientific treatment often leads to error. In his chapter on "The Board of Education" the author says (p. 25): "The least common method is the election of a board of education at large." This is denied by the following table,¹ which is a study of seventy-six cities.

Possibly Mr. Chancellor is right, but without facts or sources the student of these problems will decline to accept his statements when contradicted by scientific studies at hand. Similar assertions on pp. 26, 28, 184, etc., are probably wrong.

¹ Rollins, *Columbia University Contributions to Philosophy, Psychology, and Education*, Vol. II, No. 2, pp. 24-31.

After meeting such errors, the careful reader will not readily accept even statements which may be verified. All such would be much strengthened if supported by facts. For example, on p. 301, the statement, "There would be a considerably larger attendance in the schools," would be much stronger had the author taken the pains to show

	City	Ward	District	Combina- tion	Total
Popular election.....	24	22	3	3	52
Appointment by mayor.....	10	1	1	1	13
Special.....	4	3	2	2	11
Total.....	38	26	6	6	76

that in Massachusetts in 1900, 79 per cent. of all children between seven and sixteen years of age were in daily attendance, while in New Jersey, where the compulsory-attendance law applies only to children between the ages seven and twelve, the attendance is only 63 per cent.¹ On p. 209 a footnote says: "These are the actual figures of a certain small city in the East, 1903-1904." This, with a statement in the Preface (p. viii) that the author "*believes*" [italics mine] all his illustrations are "*founded* [italics mine] on fact" may well imply that other figures throughout the book are suited to the occasion. This the author allows "to avoid the identification of incidents." Such a method cannot be tolerated by the scientific student. *Facts, if of any value, must be identified, and the sources must be given to provide for verification.*

The second great weakness in this work is the narrow point of view. The author has evidently written freely of his own experience, and made little study of research done by other men. In the footnotes ninety-one references are made to other parts of this volume, ten to other writings of the author, and fifteen to the works of other men. But none of these refer to any strictly scientific study of the topics for which reference is made. In our present stage of advancement no one man is capable of treating at all adequately so large and complicated a subject. If his work is to be really worth another's study, it must be enriched by the results of scientific research made by others in special topics. To neglect such studies is inexcusable. The limited point of view of the book under review suggests a more appropriate title: "My Schools, Their Administration and Supervision by Me."

A third characteristic weakness is seen in the trivialities with which the book is loaded. To illustrate: On p. 134 is outlined in seventeen items "A School Superintendent's Day in a Small City." No. 1, "Inspected school building . . ."; No. 4, "Looked into a new textbook;" No. 8, "Ate lunch; interrupted by call of mother of sick child;" No. 13, "Read afternoon mail; sent notes regretting absence from office to following callers: Presbyterian minister, carpenter . . ., mother of child suspended from school for misconduct;" No. 17, "Read an hour and retired for the night." What is worth doing at all is worth doing well. Why did the author omit certain other details earlier in the day, such as "Awoke, washed face [probably], dressed," etc.? Many other such trivialities might be pointed out, but suffice it merely to refer the reader to one other: the interesting little romance on pp. 214 and 215, which should not be overlooked by anyone interested in that sort of thing. The author evidently had in mind the words of George Eliot: "It is right and meet that there should be an abundant utterance of good sound commonplaces." The book

¹ Taken from the census and school reports for 1900.

does abound in *commonplaces*. For example: pp. 89-99 outline twelve so-called "principles of administration" relating to the superintendent. Briefly, these are: "deal with matters in the order of their relative importance," "memory," "dispatch," "courtesy, graciousness, desire to be kind," "foresight," "be systematic and methodical," "courage," "trust subordinates," "mean to neglect nothing," "be no respecter of persons," "a competent administrator administers wisely his own time," "the last principle of sound administration includes punctuality, promptness, and reliability." Most of these are illustrated by the personal experience of "a certain very successful superintendent." What man, otherwise equipped for a superintendency, is in need of such paternal counsel?

Space forbids further analysis of the deficiencies of this work. It is certainly unjust to judge any book by selected quotations. Those given above are simply types of what may be found throughout the volume. The fifty-six pages devoted to fifty appendices are subject to similar criticism.

In conclusion: The above criticism may seem severe. It is so intended. If teaching as a profession and the study of education as a new departure in university work succeed in gaining and maintaining the professional standing and scholastic rank that are wanted, we must unreservedly disapprove of all educational books that savor of charlatanry, and insist upon standards demanded in all truly scientific studies. I believe Mr. Chancellor has attempted the impossible. School administration and supervision is too large a subject to be summarily treated in a single volume. A textbook in this field is not needed. We do need scientific studies of particular topics presented in monograph form. It is hoped that the author's intended second volume, *Our Schools, Their Courses of Study and Methods*, if presented at all, will be free from the unscientific method, the narrowness, and the trivialities characteristic of the present volume.

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The Ancient World. By WILLIS M. WEST. Part I, "Greece and the East;" Part II, "Rome and the West." Allyn & Bacon, 1904.

This text is a somewhat simplified form of the *Ancient History*, by the same author, which appeared several years ago. The earlier work invited the criticism that the narrative of political and military events had sometimes been too greatly curtailed, in order to make room for the broader discussion of the social life of the Greeks and Romans, and of the economic conditions characteristic of the various periods. The Peloponnesian War, for example, with all its dire consequences for Athens, was dismissed with but a brief outline of events and their dates. In the present volume the author has maintained much better the balance between the various elements which go to make up the life of a nation, and has succeeded in producing a textbook which is to be strongly commended. It is evidently the work of a man who has had practical experience in high-school teaching. The text is clear and interestingly written. But the mistake is not made of adopting that artificial simplicity of style which is sometimes considered suitable for high-school readers.

This volume treats briefly of the rise and decline of the oriental nations, Egypt, the Mesopotamian empires, Phœnicia, and the Hebrews; of the history of Greece to the decline of the Achæan League; of the growth and decay of the Roman Republic;